

IN HONOR OF LES BLANK

WHEREAS, Les Blank was born in Tampa, Florida and attended Tulane University where he played football and has lived in Berkeley for more than 35 years, making independent documentary films, and

WHEREAS, with a soft spoken demeanor, an eye for beauty, an insightful mind and great enthusiasm, Les Blank has captured the essence of aspects of American culture, and

WHEREAS, Les Blank, through his respectful, quiet presence, and non-didactic style created films that allow his subjects to reveal their true selves in a unique way, and

WHEREAS, some of the most interesting aspects of our culture have been documented by Les, creating a distinguished body of work of more than forty films over fifty years, all with a respect and love for people, their rituals, quirks, music and their food, including “The Blues According to Lighting Hopkins”, “Dry Wood”, “Chulas Fronteras”, “Always for Pleasure”, “Garlic is As Good as Ten Mothers”, and “Burden of Dreams”, to name a few, and

WHEREAS, Les Blank has received the recognition of being one of America’s finest documentary filmmakers, with retrospectives mounted across the globe and a British Academy Award for “Burden of Dreams” in 1982; Grand Prize, Melbourne Film Festival for “In Heaven There is No Beer” in 1985, the American Film Institute’s Maya Deren Award for outstanding achievement as an independent filmmaker in 1990 and the Edward MacDowell Medal in 2007.

WHEREAS, The City of Berkeley is very proud to have Les Blank as a resident and joins others who have celebrated his contributions to the documentary and honor him for his work that has enlightened so many about America’s rich and diverse cultural legacy

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that I Tom Bates, Mayor of the City of Berkeley, recognize and honor Les Blank in his hometown of Berkeley, California and do hereby declare January 22, 2013 as Les Blank Day in the City of Berkeley in recognition of his creativity, sensitivity, humanity and enormous contribution to the documentary genre.